

BE MY WITNESSES!

Acts 1:8 ... you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.



February 2018

Can I Get a Witness? - by Steve Cohen

In December, 2017, I was privileged to have the month of December for Portals of Prayer, a quarterly devotional that reaches hundreds of thousands of readers. I received many encouraging notes following its release. One note was from a man who tracked me down by contacting a local LCMS church. He had written a book on Israel and wanted my thoughts. But more than that, he sought my insights to help in a personal witness he has been sharing with the editor of his book, a lady who comes from a strong Jewish background.

I made an appointment to go to his home in Sun City. We had a wonderful chat focusing on his book and seeking suggestions on witnessing to his editor, now his good friend. The one thing that came to my mind is that our people prefer directness over taking bunny trails all over the hills until finally arriving at the topic you wish to discuss. Being direct does two things:

1. It allows you to test the waters of interest on the part of the hearer while clearing away the chaff in dialogue
2. It gives the hearer the opportunity to respond directly. That shows respect for the other person.

A good opening question is, "What do you think of Jesus?" If you get a red light to that question, you have not done something wrong, you have just helped the hearer to see that this is not the time for that conversation. It does not mean NEVER, just not now. If you get a green light, you are free to advance the conversation. Further on in the dialogue, I have found it helpful to ask this question, "What hindrances are there right now that are keeping you from receiving God's free gift of salvation?" This allows the hearer to voice bottom line concerns so that you can pray with them for God to reveal His truth.

He was very grateful for our discussion. I told him that I was speaking at a Bible class at our home church in Cedar Park, Good Shepherd Lutheran, and perhaps he may want to invite her to come. He did, and she did. After the class focusing on Yom Kippur in the Bible and Jesus being the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, he had an hour-long discussion, joined by fellow member and fellow Jewish believer Joe Berk, on being Jewish and believing in Jesus. She is seeking the truth and open to God's showing her that Jesus really is her Messiah. Please pray for K. as she walks on her spiritual journey towards life in the Messiah.



Searching for a “Good” Jew!

By Rev. Dr. Robert M. Roegner

Some crazy things can happen when you are traveling. A good case in point is what happened to me a couple of weeks ago while traveling to Austin, Texas, to visit Steve and Nancy Cohen for a time of discussion and orientation.

I was flying Delta Airlines through Atlanta and spent some time between flights in the Delta Sky Club. While having a light lunch and waiting for my next flight, two gentlemen at the table next to me were talking and could easily be heard. Not wanting to eavesdrop, I tried to ignore them and was fairly successful in doing so, until one man said to the other, “You’re a good Jew!”

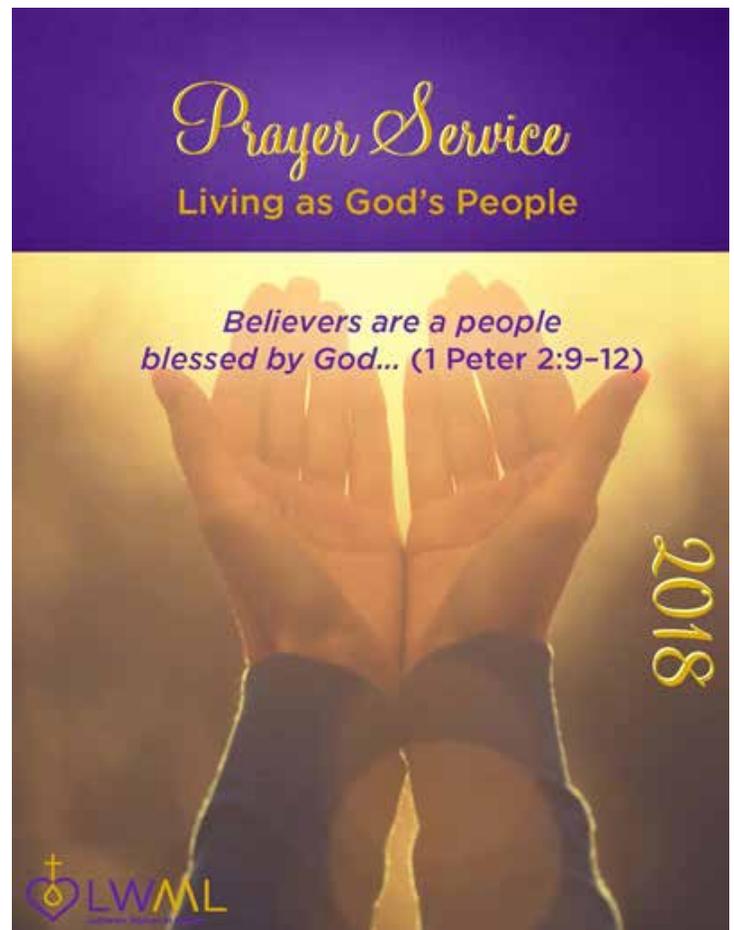
I couldn’t believe what I had just heard and wasn’t going to let this opportunity get away. So, I asked the man who said, “You’re a good Jew,” to his friend, “Why is your friend a good Jew?” He replied, “Well, he is a smart and shrewd business man who always seems to get his way. He makes good money and he is a good husband and father.” “That sounds wonderful” I said, “and congrats to you for being a good Jew.” But then I said, “I’m going to Austin, Texas, to visit a good Jewish friend of mine, as well.” “Really,” said the first gentleman. Then the Jewish man asked, “What makes your Jewish friend in Austin, a good Jew?” So, without missing a beat, I said, “My Jewish friend in Austin is a good Jew because he knows Y’shua as his Messiah!” You should have seen the look on their faces. They both, no doubt, did not expect my answer. As you could expect, the conversation came to an end very quickly.

However, that’s OK, because in that very short 2-3-minute conversation, God through the power of His Holy Spirit allowed me to plant a seed. I’m praying for both these gentlemen but especially for the “Good” Jew!

Looking for a Mission Prayer

Service for 2018?

Well, look no further than the Lutheran Woman’s Missionary League, “Living as God’s People,” based on I Peter 2:9-12. Written for the LWML, by Rev. Dr. Robert M. Roegner, The Apple of His Eye’s (AOHE) first missionary to Israel. AOHE is a Recognized Service Organization and the LWML an auxiliary of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.



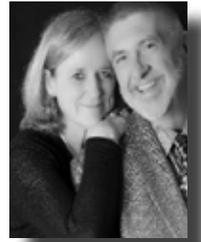
Many factors come to mind when we think of who we are — our identity. In his first letter, Peter continually reminds his readers of their identity. Rather than focus on inane worldly details, he zeroes in on what’s most important: our standing in the eyes of God or our place in His kingdom.

The 2018 Prayer Service is now available below as free downloads by going to: <http://www.lwml.org/prayer-service>.

Don’t hesitate to contact Dr. Roegner by email, robert.roegner@appleofhiseye.org or by phone 314.640.9558.



NanC's Corner



Meet Kristi Roegner

"A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life" Proverbs 31: 10,11,12

I am so excited to present one of the newest member of the AOHE team:

Kristi Roegner, wife of Rev. Dr. Bob Roegner

Kristi is the hardest-working, sweetest, woman of compassion and conviction that I have met in a very long time. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Kristi was the only daughter of a Lutheran Pastor, (with 3 older brothers by the way!). Before she was a year old, her family moved to the greater Philadelphia area. There she was raised in the shadow of the church in a godly Christian home. She was not ignorant of the behind-the-scenes hard work, lack of privacy, different homes and the many sacrifices that go into being a Pastor's wife and child. Temper all of that with an abundance of love and Jesus, and you get Kristi. When she was 12, her family moved to Valley City, Ohio, her Dad's, (Rev. Rudolph Sandmann), new call. She finished high school there and continued to college. Headed into social work, she entered Concordia Jr. College (it was a two-year college at that time) in Ann Arbor, Michigan. It was while in college that she met Bob Roegner. I have heard the story from him, and he was smitten and determined to have her as his wife! Smart man - Bob got a catch! She met him when she was 17, engaged at 18 and married at 19... whew! If you know Bob, when he has a plan, he follows through, and doesn't waste God's time. After finishing school, Seminary (FT Wayne), vicarage etc., God's stage was set for a crucial move in their lives.

LIBERIA After Bob's call to the mission field, the Roegners (Kristi age of 25) moved to Liberia, West Africa. At that point they brought with them the first half of their little family to be - Amy, 2-years-old; and Jeremey, 5 1/2 months old. I have traveled to and from Europe and the Middle East numerous times, and always praised the Lord I didn't have to bring babies! I cannot imagine how worn out Kristi was when she entered her new world of Africa. After Bob did initial survey work to determine where he would begin serving as an evangelistic church planter, they then traveled to the northwest tip of Liberia (near the borders of Guinea and Sierra Leone) to their new home in Lofa County for the next 9+ years.

Their home was always "open", with Liberians coming and going. Kristi welcomed it, and engaged in helping with assorted needs - especially administering aid to the sick. Even a simple pain reliever is a major comfort and aid in a country where there was little access to medicines. I want to note here that Kristi was also a missionary, she was not invisible. Sometimes we forget that the wife is an able-bodied soul working side by side with her husband and carrying just as great a burden for the souls of the people. After two furloughs, their little family had grown to a family of six. Each return to Africa came with a new addition: Stephanie (at 4 1/2 months) and then baby Tracy (when he was 3 1/2 months). Two sons and two daughters gave Kristi a handful to care for, as well as caring for Bob and duties outside the home.

One of the hardest trials for Kristi was leaving her two oldest children in boarding school in Nigeria. Although the joy of serving the Lord as a foreign missionary is an unspeakable privilege, joy and blessing, it comes with great sacrifice. Through this interview, I never once heard Kristi complain. She is not a whiner. She said "God will give me what I need when I need it. I will be the missionary He equips me to be"

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The mission field isn't for sissies and Kristi has proven that over and over again.

Dealing with both minor and serious illness (both with family and villagers) was normal. All the family (except for Kristi herself) contracted malaria numerous times over the years. One particularly memorable time was the night before leaving her two oldest children (though still very young themselves) at the boarding school in Nigeria while also caring for their third child who was sick with cerebral malaria. She reminisced (if I can use that term) that she walked around and around the dining room table in the guest house with her feverish baby, singing that wonderful hymn, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus", over and over and over that night. (She doesn't know this, but my face was covered with tears as she quoted the lyrics.) [I will post the hymn in another area].

I asked her if she ever missed the comforts of home while on the field and she said: "I remember standing at the kitchen sink and never felt deprived." When you see the full picture, you understand. She said: "There were women from another village who would walk five miles with their sick children and come to my house for care. I would share the medication they needed, if I had it. I wanted to help them and show God's love. Sharing, loving, showing God's love – taking time from my kids to give to the wonderful people of the Kisi tribe. I served as I could – our home was open and full of people much of the time (our kids always loved to have their friends with them). I didn't know the language well (time factor) but I communicated via compassion. ALSO little Amy was my interpreter and I trusted her to convey my words. Amy picked up the language quickly and loved being my 'voice'."

After 10 years on the foreign field the Roegners returned to the States in 1990, for Bob's new position as Area Secretary for Africa, Europe and the Middle East for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod World Mission Department.

Fast forward to NOW--- Kristi is again heading to the foreign field with her husband. ISRAEL While most people yearn for retirement – the Roegners are yearning to serve. And this time with God's Chosen People! Kristi shared that her parents fully supported them when they left for Africa. This time she is leaving adult children and five (six as of August) grandchildren. What is their reaction I asked? "The same – very supportive and not surprised."

What a joy to have Godly children who rejoice in God's leading!

This is no small thing – I know many families who throw fits when their loved ones serve God on the foreign field. My family was soooo excited for our service in Russia, then me in Israel and Paris. Sadly, that's not the norm.

She is looking forward to learning a new culture and regrets not knowing the Jewish culture as much as she would like to. Kristi: "I go, trusting Him. I don't know what my new role is or what task He is going to give me, but I know God has it covered. I am a comforter, God has blessed me in this and I know He will put people in my path. In hindsight, we see the lessons that we learned have totally prepared us for where God is leading us now."

I want to close this with a portion of Psalm 139, Kristi's favorite verses:

"...if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast." Verse 10

God speed my sweet sister! From my heart, blessings and love, nancy

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus

[Helen H. Lemmel](#), 1922

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O soul, are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free!

◦ Refrain:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.

Through death into life everlasting
He passed, and we follow Him there;
O'er us sin no more hath dominion—
For more than conqu'rors we are!

His Word shall not fail you—He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell!

Satan's Beatitudes

Blessed are those who are too tired, too busy, too distracted to spend an hour once a week with their fellow Christians – **they are my best workers.**

Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked – **I can use them.**

Blessed are the touchy who stop going to church – **they are my best missionaries.**

Blessed are the troublemakers – **they shall be called my favorite children.**

Blessed are the complainers, **I'm all ears to them.**

Blessed are those who are bored with the Minister's mannerisms and mistakes – **for the get nothing out of his sermons.**

Blessed in the church member who expects to be invited to his own church – **for he is part of the problem instead of part of the solution.**

Blessed are those who gossip – **for they shall cause strife and divisions that please me.**

Blessed are those who are easily offended – **for they shall get angry and quit. I like that.**

Blessed are those who do not give their offering to carry on God's work – **for they are my helpers.**

Blesses is He who professes to love God but hates his brother – **for he shall be with me forever.**

Blessed are you who, when you read this or hear this, think it is about other people and not yourself—**I've got you in my pocket too.**

Author Unknown

Jesus' Beatitudes

Matt. 5:2 And [Jesus] opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

Matt. 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matt. 5:4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Matt. 5:5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Matt. 5:6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Matt. 5:7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Matt. 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Matt. 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Matt. 5:10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matt. 5:11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."



**CHOOSE
THIS DAY
WHOM
YOU WILL
SERVE!**



Mr. Cohen, I realize that you are a very busy man and I appreciate you taking the time to read this email. I am a Christian (born Jewish, baptized at in 1968 at the age of 27). I am a member of The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. I have been reading your contributions to this month's Portals of Prayer and your web site with great interest and have many questions. Please understand that these questions are asked with great respect for you, your beliefs, and the work that you are doing to bring the message of Jesus Christ, our Savior to the world.

My family is Jewish as far back as anyone has been able to trace, but my parents were not what you would call "religious". They observed some of the Holy days, but not all. We also had Christmas Trees (one large Jewish congregation in Chicago had what they called a Hanukkah Bush). They weren't able to afford to belong to any Jewish congregations due to the outrageous membership fees that were charged. My parents always taught me that the word "Jewish" was a religion, not a nationality or race. I do understand that in Scripture the Jews are referred to as a race.

I am very confused by both your words and those of the organization, Jews for Jesus. Have you been baptized? If so, why do you not refer to yourself as a Christian (or at the least a Jewish Christian)? If you are a Christian, why does your web site state that your organization is closed on Saturdays for the Sabbath? Do you still follow the dietary laws of the Old Testament? If you are being hospitalized and are asked what your religion is, do you say Jewish or Christian?... One more question, please. My husband is and has always been a Christian. Our sons were never taken to a temple to be "named", but they have both been baptized and raised as Christians. Does the fact that I was born "Jewish" make my sons Jews instead of Christians? Once again, thank you for your time. ---Sallie M. Hoyt Lakes, Minnesota

Shalom, Sallie... Thank you for writing me! Your questions are all good ones and I know that many others share these same questions, too. Indeed, I am a Christian, but for many of my Jewish people that term carries a negative connotation bringing up past atrocities, etc. I am Jewish because of I am part of God's covenant going all the way back to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. I am a believer in Jesus by virtue of God's New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34 through faith in Jesus, the Messiah. This is not just a matter of semantics, for when we search the history of the early church it was Jewish at its core. It was even questioned whether Gentiles could follow Jesus with first becoming Jewish (See Acts 15). Since the 5th century, anti-Jewish so-called followers of Jesus have sought to eradicate all vestiges of things Jewish from the church.

Our offices are closed on Saturdays because we are open Monday through Friday. The Sabbath is a joy given by God in which we have the liberty to observe, along with the rest of God's festivals, feasts and fasts (see Leviticus 23). I am not a strict follower of the dietary laws, but I do have personal preferences based on my background.

Your children receive 100% of God's covenant through you making them Jewish, and 100% of God's blessing and salvation through faith in Jesus. This is not an either/or situation as some rabbis say, this is a both/and. Praise God your children are following the Lord!

When I was in the hospital last August, I put down on the form Jewish-Christian. That alone provided opportunities for witness and discussion.

Many people are discovering today, as they do ancestral research, that they have Jewish roots. I am finishing up a book entitled Jewish By Discovery and I have it available in pre-publication draft. If someone is interested, please write me at Steve.cohen@appleofhiseye.org and request Jewish by Discovery. I will send it for free.

May God bless you richly, Sallie. We covet YOUR prayers as we move forward in our 22nd year in The Apple of His Eye and my 42nd year as a missionary. In Y'shua - Steve Cohen - Romans 10:1

**Your prayers and continuing mission support make it possible for us to move forward with the Gospel in this our 22nd year of direct evangelism service and equipping the church.
THANK YOU FOR CARING AND SHARING!**



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Apple of His Eye Mission Society exists to boldly declare Y'shua as the Messiah and urgently equip God's people to do the same.

We are passionate about telling Jewish people and gentiles that Jesus is the promised Messiah and invite them to respond in faith.

The term "**Apple of His Eye**" comes from the Bible. It refers to the "small man" or pupil of the eye that is protected by the Lord:

*Deuteronomy 32:7-12 Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you. When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel. For the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance. In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the **apple of his eye**, like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions. The LORD alone led him; no foreign god was with him.*

Our name sprang from an outreach event in 1990, our very first one in The Big Apple, New York City. **We aim for Lutherans to associate the phrase today with Jewish evangelism.**

We are a **MISSION** society in that we are going; and giving the Gospel wherever we go: public events and places, giving presentations in churches, through our personal lives, and in the development of materials and technologies to tell the Good News of Messiah.

We are a **SOCIETY** in the sense that we are a group of people who share an interest, aim, and profession of faith.

**We are organized around a set of
CORE VALUES which link us together.**

The Apple "Core" Values: The Glen Eyrie Accord was unanimously ratified at the 2nd LCMS Jewish Missions retreat in Colorado Springs, Colorado on June 22, 2000.

Direct Jewish Evangelism It is vital that we focus energy on a clear presentation of the Good News of life and salvation in Y'shua to unsaved Jewish people world-wide. (Romans 1:16)

Lutheran Biblical Doctrine We value sound Biblical grace-oriented teaching as we equip people to be witnesses to the life we find in the Messiah, Y'shua.

Planting Messianic Congregations The planting of worshipping congregations with a messianic Jewish heritage is an important outcome of our ministry.

Nurturing Mishpochah (Family) We value a caring and committed community which will rejoice with one another in victory and mourn with those who mourn. We recognize that for some, faith in Y'shua may lead to loss of family and Jewish community support, and we willingly stand in the gap to provide support and community for those Jewish believers.

Awareness and Training for the Church in Jewish Evangelism We value raising the awareness level of Lutheran congregations for their Jewish community neighbors and we work to lift their zeal and skills in sharing their faith with them.

Leadership Development We prize the discovery and usage of the Spiritual Gifts and talents of Jewish and gentile believers, and we invest time and energy in training and deploying them to carry out God's mission in the community and the world.

We Value God's Promises Concerning the Jewish People

We believe that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. The promises that He has made concerning the Jewish people will be consummated in His time (Jer. 31:35-37; Romans 11:24-26). We stand against anti-Semitism in all of its forms, and view withholding the Gospel from the Jewish people to be the worst form of anti-Semitism.

SAVE THE DATE!... February 12-23, 2019

Dear Friends of The Apple of His Eye Mission Society (AOHE). Have you ever wanted to travel to the Holy Land, but you just weren't sure who to go with, or the cost just seemed too high? Well, AOHE missionaries to Israel, Rev. Dr. Robert and Kristi Roegner, will be hosting and leading a tour to Israel on behalf of AOHE - in cooperation with Joyful Journeys Travel & Tours, LLC, a Christian travel company here in the United States of America and SAR-EL Tours & Conferences, a Messianic Jewish travel company in Israel.

Save the date, and plan to join us next year from February 12-23, 2019, a 12-day "Walking in the Footsteps of Y'shua" tour! This trip will be limited to 48 people and trip brochures will be available by March 1st. More information will be shared in next month's AOHE newsletter, including, costs, trip particulars, and a sample itinerary. However, if you would like to get a jump on getting this information prior to March 1st and before the next AOHE newsletter is published, then feel free to send an email to robert.roegner@appleofhiseye.org, or call Dr. Roegner at 314.640.9558.

